

Project Summary

Provide a summary (one-page maximum) that describes key elements of the project and states the total project cost.

Please type here: Project Description: Lassen Land & Trails Trust (LLTT), a California 501(c)3 non-profit land conservancy is requesting \$49,090 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) to fund the coordination, one quarter of the funding for a phase 1 environmental site assessment (ESA), development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation for purchase of the line by the Wildlife Conservation Board, and creation of a long term management plan for the Modoc Line Rail to Trail corridor in the North Sierra Sub region of the SNC operating area.

The Modoc Line is a railway corridor running north from Wendel, California approximately 85 miles to the McArthur Siding, 12 miles south of Alturas, California. LLTT, Lassen and Modoc Counties, and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) have joined in a partnership to preserve and maintain the linear integrity of the corridor for trail use, historical integrity, environmental and water quality value, and as potential future rail service and potential use as a utility corridor.

The corridor is currently owned by the Union Pacific Railroad (UP) through a combination of fee title ownership, rights-of-way and easements and other mechanisms. Acquisition by LLTT would maintain the corridor and provide environmental and economic benefits for the area. Absent such acquisition, the corridor will fragment as lands revert to underlying landowners and UP's fee title land is sold piecemeal. Union Pacific will only allow a phase 1 ESA of the line once a formal offer has been submitted that indicates the prospective buyer.

LLTT has submitted this formal offer as of November 5th, 2007, and timing has become increasingly important. Once this LOU has been accepted by UP, a feasibility review period begins during which time LLTT or its contractors will have a right of entry to the Modoc Line to complete a phase 1 ESA.--This period runs until February 29th, 2008. Lassen County has approximately \$8,000 in BLM funding that is available to complete a phase 1 ESA.

In the spring of 2007, McGinley and Associates submitted a proposal to complete a Modoc Line phase 1 ESA for \$10,090. By the end of August 2007 they had again expressed interest in the project. McGinley and Associates indicated that they could complete the phase 1 ESA within 3 weeks of authorization.

The Modoc line runs through fifteen separate watersheds in the North Sierra Sub Region of the SNC operating area, and a phase 1 ESA of this corridor will be invaluable in determining potential threats and hazards to these sensitive watersheds.

It is the hope of this multi-agency partnership that the SNC will help facilitate these crucial steps in protecting this unique and valuable resource.